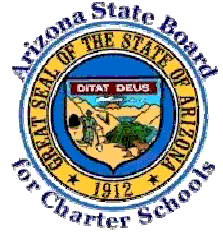


Arizona State Board for Charter Schools

Newsletter

August 2003

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As you wrap up your summer and gear up for another great school year, the staff of the State Board for Charter Schools wishes you a productive year. This newsletter is full of reminders, updates, and announcements to assist you with your upcoming year.

Five Additional Charters to Provide Distance Learning

The following schools will join PPEP & Affiliates and Sequoia Choice as charter schools approved to participate in the Technology Assisted Project-based Instruction Program as described in HB 2093:

- ★ Sierra Vista Charter School, Inc.
- ★ Phoenix Special Programs, Inc.
- ★ Humanities and Sciences Academy of the United States, Inc.
- ★ Pinnacle Education, Inc.
- ★ Primavera Technical Learning Center

Changes in Auditing Requirements

At the June 9, 2003 meeting of the State Board for Charter Schools, the Board adopted a new compliance questionnaire to be used for completion of the Fiscal Year 2003 audits and has moved up the deadline for audit submission to November 15, beginning with the Fiscal Year 2004 audits. Audit guidelines, a sample engagement letter, and copies of the questionnaires are all available on our website at

www.asbcs.state.az.us/asbcs/AuditRes.asp.

Expedited Mid-year Transfer Opportunity for State Board Sponsored Schools

An expedited transfer process has been approved by the Board for those schools currently sponsored by the State Board of Education who wish to transfer mid-year to the State Board for Charter Schools. The deadline for the expedited transfer is December 1, 2003. All schools currently sponsored by the State Board will be receiving information from the Charter Board office regarding the transfer option. Please visit our website for more information on the expedited transfer process.

Schools Sponsored by the State Board of Education

You are invited to attend a meeting to be held September 5 from 1-3 p.m. to introduce you to the Charter Board staff and provide additional information and discuss the Notification and Amendment processes, Charter Board policies, processing of complaints, Expedited Transfer process, any other questions you may have.

Applications for New Charters for the 2004-05 School Year

The application was posted on our website after it was approved by the Board in May. Over 100 individuals have attended Prospective Applicant Workshops, which occurred throughout the summer. The deadline for submission of applications is **September 10, 2003**. The Board is looking for Review Panel members who will score preliminary applications. If you would like to volunteer your time and charter expertise, please contact DeAnna at foulds_deanna@pop.state.az.us.

Fingerprint Clearance Card and Fingerprint Criminal History Check Reminder

As you make personnel decisions for the up-coming school year, keep the following in mind.

In accordance with A.R.S. 15-183.C.4:

- ✓ All persons engaged in instructional work directly as a classroom, laboratory or other teacher or indirectly as a supervisory teacher, speech therapist or principal shall have a valid fingerprint clearance card.
 - For compliance purposes, this could be verified via:
 - a copy of the valid fingerprint clearance card being placed in the individual's file on site
 - a list that includes the individuals' names, job description, clearance card number, and the date the validity of card was confirmed.
 - To confirm the validity of a fingerprint clearance card, an authorized individual may:
 - Verify the status of a card by logging on to Certification Search via Common Logon at <http://www.ade.az.gov/>. This will work for certified teachers who were required to possess a clearance card for certification purposes and those who checked the box for charter school employment when applying for a clearance card.
 - Send a fax **on your letterhead** to DPS at 602-223-2947. The fax must include:
 1. Contact name for the individual submitting the request.
 2. Return fax number
 3. First and last name of each card holder
 4. Clearance card number for each card to be verified
 5. Space next to each inquiry for DPS to provide a written responseDPS will respond by fax within 5 business days.
- ✓ A charter school shall not employ a teacher whose certificate has been revoked for a violation of § 15-507 or 15-550 or for any offense that placed a pupil in danger.
 - To verify if an individual ever held an Arizona teaching certificate, an authorized individual may confirm the certification status of an individual by logging on to Certification Search via Common Logon at <http://www.ade.az.gov/>.
- ✓ All other personnel (those not covered in "all persons engaged in instructional work directly as a classroom, laboratory or other teacher or indirectly as a supervisory teacher, speech therapist or principal"), whether paid or unpaid, shall be fingerprint and background checked pursuant to § 15-512.
 - For compliance purposes, this could be verified via:
 - a list that includes
 1. The individuals' names
 2. Job description
 3. Dates criminal history checks were received by the school, from both FBI and DPS. These are obtained by a school when it follows the procedures for a fingerprint criminal history check using the school's ORI number.
 4. Documented, good faith efforts to contact previous employers of a person to obtain information and recommendations that may be relevant to a person's fitness for employment as described in § 15-512.F.

An additional reminder: Schools sponsored by the State Board for Charter Schools must also be able to demonstrate that up-to-date fingerprint criminal history check information has been obtained for each member of its governing body as indicated in the charter contract.

For more information on the fingerprinting processes, visit the link on our website at <http://www.asbcs.state.az.us/asbcs/fingerprinting.asp>.

Estimated Count and Enrollment Form Reminder

The Arizona State Board for Charter School approved a motion to require charter schools to have specific student and parent information on file for any student that is recorded on the estimated enrollment list. A letter was sent May 1st explaining the new requirement and included a sample form.

All the required information for the submission of student data to School Finance, as well as the information the Charter Board is requiring you to maintain on file, is listed below. Please note that it is important to have on file specific parent contact information, as well as a parent signature. *A charter operating more than one site must have a separate enrollment form or a means to determine which specific site each enrollment form is for.*

Student Information: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Name: First, Middle Initial, Last• Date of Birth• Grade Level• School Attended in 2003-03• Special Education Category (if applicable)• English Language Learner (if applicable)	Parent/Guardian Information: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Name: First, Middle, Last• Address & Phone: Street, Apartment #, City, State, Zip, Phone• Signature on Form School Information: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• School year for which the student is registering, enrolling, or re-enrolling• Address of site
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Visit <http://www.ade.az.gov/schoolfinance/DueDates/Charters/> to view the Data Collection Dates for Charters. A copy of the calendar is also included with this newsletter. As indicated on the calendar, your estimated enrollment lists should be updated by August 22 and September 19 to adequately reflect the enrollment forms on file at each school.

AIMS and SAT9 Testing

The Critical Dates Calendar for 2003-2004 Testing is out. A copy of the calendar is included. Be sure you include the following additions to your school's testing dates:

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| • AIMS Field Test of Writing Prompts | Grades 3,5,8, and 10 | October 6-10, 2003 |
| • AIMS Field Test | Grades 4, 6, and 7 | April 19-30 |

AIMS High School Test Dates have changed and makeup days have been added. Mark your calendars.

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| • Writing | February 24 | Makeup Day - March 2 |
| • Reading | February 25 | Makeup Day - March 3 |
| • Math | April 22 | Makeup Day - April 26 |

The Department of Education will be presenting Testing Workshops. Watch the ADE website for details.

Attorney General's Opinion on Charter Schools and Prop 203

The office of the Attorney General for the State of Arizona has issued an opinion that charter schools are not subject to the requirements of Proposition 203 unless a school's charter provides otherwise. Charter schools that do not follow Proposition 203 are not eligible for additional state funding for English learners (\$314 per pupil). While not required to follow the mandates of Prop 203, charter schools must comply with the federal requirements under the Equal Educational Opportunities Act that requires any public school to take "appropriate action to overcome language barriers that impede equal participation by its students in its instructional programs." For a complete copy of the Opinion go to <http://www.ag.state.az.us/opinions/I03-002.pdf>.

2003 Arizona Accountability Communications Workshop

All charter school chief administrators should have received a letter from Superintendent Horne providing information about this workshop coming to your county. The workshop will include information pertaining to:

- Legislative changes made to ARIZONA LEARNS
- Methodological changes made to ARIZONA LEARNS
- Results of negotiations between the Department and the U.S. Department of Education regarding the implementation of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001
- Details about appeals procedures and timelines established by the Department for ARIZONA LEARNS and the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001.

According to the letter, county superintendents will contact charter operators regarding the location, date and time of the workshop in their area. Workshops are scheduled throughout the month of August.

Highly Qualified Teachers

The Certification Rules Task Force Committee and Subcommittees have been working to draft a rubric for current teachers to be considered highly qualified. The State Board of Education is planning to review and respond to the most up to date DRAFT at a study session scheduled for August 5th.

State Board of Education to Consider AZ LEARNS Formulas and Highly Qualified Teacher Rubric

The State Board is planning to discuss and consider the approval of both the AZ LEARNS Formulas and Highly Qualified Teacher Rubric at its regularly scheduled meeting on August 25th.

Scholarships Available for Special Education Certification

Do you have a teacher who is interested in getting certified to teach special education in Arizona? If so, the following announcement is for you! The Arizona State Improvement Grant has posted the scholarship applications for the Fall semester at: www.azsig.com. Please let your teachers know!

Training Opportunities Available

Be sure to regularly check the ADE website that has direct registration links for ADE sponsored training in a variety of areas including Academic Achievement, AZ READS, Exceptional Student Services, Standards Based Teaching and Learning, and Child Nutrition. <http://www.ade.az.gov/onlineregistration/>

"HIGHLY QUALIFIED" Teachers Available for this School Year

Teach For America is the national corps of outstanding recent college graduates of all academic majors and diverse backgrounds who commit two years to teach in urban and rural public schools and who become lifelong leaders in the effort to expand opportunity for children. Corps members go above and beyond traditional expectations to ensure their students make dramatic gains in academic achievement.

Currently, Teach For America enjoys a special and unique partnership with the Arizona State Department of Education that guarantees teachers for its district and school partners that meet all federal and state requirements for the NCLB legislation. As part of this partnership, all their teachers have taken and passed the AEPA, and the Certification Unit has issued them a Teacher Intern Certificate, which allows for the assumption of full teaching responsibilities with the "highly qualified" status.

Teach For America is still seeking additional partners for this school year (SY 2003-2004) from the Charter School Community. Typical partner schools are located within Maricopa County and serve populations of students from low-income communities struggling with academic achievement. The program places teachers in all grade levels and subject areas, including special education, bilingual/ESL, math and science. If you are interested in hiring "highly qualified" teachers from the Teach For America program, please contact their Senior Program Director, Nicholas Krump, as soon as possible at 602-926-1809 or nkrump@teachforamerica.org.

Have a Great School Year!